41.

THE Late Viſcount Stafford

Found more GUILTY by his

PRETENDED INNOCENCY

IN HIS LAST

Speech on Tower-Hill.

IF any Speech of a dying man is to be examined, it muſt be this of the late Viſcount *Stafford*: at the entrance he has theſe words, that *by the permiſſion of God*, he has reaſon to ſay it, *he is brought to ſuffer death*. In the ſame Paragraph, he moſt ſolemnly proteſts his Innocency, even *in a thought*: Mark the words, for they are according to the Principles of his Religion, *of the Crimes laid to his Charge*.

In the ſecond Paragraph, he *hopes God will accept of his good intentions*, the will for the deed, in promoting the Catholick Cauſe.

In the third, he confeſſes himſelf to be of the *Church of Rome*, and *believes upon conſideration*, his perſwaſion to be the only cauſe of his impriſonment: Take notice of the following words, I *knew my ſelf not culpable ſo much as in a thought*: but every one, God be thanked, know the thoughts of the Church of *Rome* is to cut our throats if they can, and to burn our Cities, of both which we have had ſad experiencies: how many Millions of poor Proteſtants have been maſſacred in *Ireland*, and elſewhere? who were they who fired our *London* but the Papiſts? ſome of the Popiſh Party have confeſſed it; it plainly appears by the Examinations publiſhed in 1667. taken before a Committee of Parliament for that purpoſe: *His Religion*, he ſaith, *teacheth nothing but the right worſhip of God, obedience to the King, and due ſubordination to the temporal Laws of the Kingdom*. To the firſt I need not ſay much, for it is ſufficiently proved by good and able Divines, that the Romiſh Religion is full of Idolatry: by conſequence then the Romaniſts have not the right worſhip of God.

Obedience to the King: The Viſcount had done us a pleaſure if he had named this King: whether *Charles* or *James* we know not; but thus much we know, that among Papiſts Proteſtant Kings are unKinged as Uſurpers: we know what is meant by the word Titular, they diſpoſe of Dignities, and diſpoſſeſs as they pleaſe: Was not *Corker* Biſhop of *London*, *Compton* being diſpoſſeſt as an Heretick? Is not Cardinal *Howard* at *Rome* Protector of the *Engliſh* Catholicks in *England*? well may he ſay then *obedience to the King* for our moſt gracious Proteſtant *Charles* is dethroned by them for his *Hereſie*, and *F. D. R.* ſet up.

Due ſubordination to the temporal Laws of the Kingdom: We alſo know all Laws made by a Proteſtant Parliament are no Laws, becauſe the Popiſh Party call ſuch a Parliament no Parliament, but Uſurpers and Raviſhers of their Goods and Eſtates, the Laws formerly enacted by Popiſh Parliaments are here meant.

The Kingdom; of what Kingdom: for a farther confirmation of what I have diſcovered, he farther adds: *I do ſubmit to all Articles of Faith believed and taught in the Catholick Church, believing them to be moſt conſonant to the Word of God: that the Doctrine of depoſing Princes is diabolical, horrid and deteſtable, and contrary to the Law of God, Nature and Nations*: He has reaſon to call it ſo, but it is known that the Pope is above the Word of God, if he calls the word of the Pope the Word of God, for he *doth ſubmit himſelf to the Articles of the Catholick Church*: he muſt then confeſs that Popiſh Bulls and Edicts to maſſacre the Proteſtants; that the *Armado* of *Spain*, by the Popes inſtigation, for the ſubduing and rooting out a peſtilent ſort of *Hereticks* here in *England*; that the *Gun-powder Treaſon*, and the bloody *Iriſh* Maſſacre, were not contrary to the Word of God: he muſt then confeſs that the execrable Murther of Sir *Edm. Godf.* the contrivances of the Devil *Gadbury*, and the Witch *Cellier*, the Aſſaſſination of Juſtice *Arnold*, but above all, their reſtleſs attempts to murder our gracious King *Charles*, and to ſubvert in our days the Religion which doth teach the right worſhip of God, are not diabolical, horrid and deteſtable, becauſe deſigned by their Church for a good intention. *I believe* (ſays he) *and profeſs that there is one God, one Saviour, one holy Catholick Church, of which through the mercy and goodneſs of God I die a Member*. How can he die a Member of the Catholick Church, if he denies the Supreme Authority of the Pope, the Head of that Church? he has diſowned the Doctrine of depoſing Princes, &c.

All the Bul's and Orders of the former Popes, as well as preſent, for the killing our King, and cutting our throats, are as he would make us believe diabolical: Well, poor Viſcount! where muſt thy Soul now be, if you die a Member of the Pope?

The fourth Paragraph is a Proteſtation of his Innocency: how can he be guilty, who is made incapable of knowing his guilt through his Religion?

The fifth requires no anſwer, if what is already ſaid be conſidered.

The ſixth is worthy of our conſideration; It *is* (ſays he) *much reported of Indulgences, Diſpenſations, Pardons, to murder, rebel, lye, forſwear, and commit ſuch other crimes held and given in the Church, I do profeſs in the preſence of God I never learned believed, or practiſed any ſuch thing, but the contrary*, &c. If he never learned, &c. how can he die a Member of the Catholick Church? And a little after he has theſe words: I *would have diſcovered, had I known any ſuch thing of any ill deſign, or illegal dangerous*

Plot. The Plot he confesses to be dangerous, but not illegal, for nothing is illegal when done for the Catholick Church: And a little further, *If I had known of any Treason, and should thus deny it as I do now upon my Salvation at this time, I should have no hope of Salvation, which now I have through the Merits of Christ Jesus.* I believe every body is satisfied by this time what we Protestants call Treason, is by the Papists accounted no Treason, and so he may deny, and truly, he should have no hope of Salvation, if he should deny to die a Member of the Catholick Church. I wonder how he came to forget the Intercession of the blessed Virgin *Mary*, of the Saints and Angels: but more of this in its place.

7. I *do beseech God to bless his Majesty, who is my lawful King, who I was always, by all Laws humane and divine, bound to obey, &c.* The question is still who is that lawful King that such a Popish Plotter may understand.

8. *Next to Treason, I hold Murder in abhorrence.* If this be true, for certain he died not a Member of the Catholick Church, because one S. *Dominick* among them was Canonized for having caused a Million of people to be killed and butchered: I find that *William Howard* will never be Sainted, because he abhors what a great Saint in the Church of *Rome* has done: *How much less would I endeavour the Assassination of his Majesty?* The five Jesuits had almost the same expressions: but neither they nor the Viscount have named *Charles*, because their Principles will not suffer them to call him King.

9. *He humbly asks pardon for all the great offences against his Divine Majesty:* This is absolutely necessary for every man upon the point of death; *And I doubt not but God will accept of the good will.* Something that was not performed is here understood, as the killing of our King, the cutting of Protestants throats, and other such like actions.

10. He desires that all People would forgive him; I dare say that all the Protestants have forgiven him, nay more, have prayed for his Conversion and Repentance; I do likewise believe that they have considered the goodness of God in his mercy to this Nation in the discovery of the Plot, brought upon a sinful Nation by the permission of God for their warning. They likewise admire the justice of this great God, (after that he had rendred the Enterprises of *Rome* ineffectual) to burn the Rods prepared to chastise them. *I forgive* (says he) *even those perjured men that have so falsly brought me hither by their perjuries.* We account a man perjured, when he shall do any thing contrary to the Tenour of the Oath he has taken, to call them Dr. *Oates, Dugdale, Prance, &c.* perjured, does imply that they have promised upon Oath to him or the Popish Party the secresie. I confess in this respect they are perjured; but if it be the pleasure of God to open the heart of a man, to make him sensible that his promise to the Pope to do some abominable and horrid action to be wicked, must he not repent, and utterly refuse to do it? If he has promised to kill a man, shall he perform it? If he has promised to damn himself, as soon as he comes to know his wickedness, shall he persist in his damnation? God for bid then to call a man perjured, because he has forsaken the Devil & his works, & cleaves unto God.

11. This is answered in the former Paragraphs.

12. *I hope I have made it appear that I have some conscience*: I do believe his Conscience was ruled by the Oath of Secresie found in Sir *T. Gas.* house. [read the Oath in one of the Pacq. from *Rome*.]

13. And so he may aver upon the Salvation, that he has discharged his conscience in keeping the Oath of Secresie to the Church of *Rome*

14. He does confirm what has already been said when he saies, *I shall say little of my Tryal, and whether it were all according to the known Law, &c.* Those words according to the known Law do intimate that a Protestant Parliament can't make Laws to bind the Papists, and so it is not a known Law to him according to his Principles, and consequently according to his conscience.

15. He tells who were his Judges; *all Persons of Honour, all as much bound to judge rightly, as if they had been upon Oath and not to Vote, but according as in their consciences they were satisfied.* What means all this pretended Innocency, having had such a fair tryal, and such upright and conscientious Judges, He doth affirm in this Paragraph his Sentence of Condemnation to be just.

16. *I shall end with my hearty Prayers for his Majesty, that he may, &c. and govern his People according to the Laws of God*, mark those words *according to the Laws of God*, we question it not, having by the mercy of God a *Protestant King* and a *Protestant Parliament*.

17. To conclude all, he *beseeches God not to revenge his innocent blood upon the Nation*, I shall ask what Nation? In one place he thus speaks, *the Laws of the Kingdom*, I have told you what Kingdom was then to be understood, in another place he has it this Kingdom, when he says on the Nation, I may believe some other, and not the Protestant *English* Nation to be meant.

I have discovered how the Viscount may plead not guilty, for he has done nothing but what his Religion and Conscience oblig'd him to; and so he has reason to say and hope the Omnipotent-all-seeing just God will deal with him accordingly.

I have found my self obliged thus to pluck off the Vizard, that the tender consciences who know not the Papists Principles, and the mysterous Iniquity of *Rome*, may be imposed upon no longer. How comes it to pass, that all the Speeches of the five Jesuites, and the Viscounts do agree so well together, so well, as if they all came out of the same Mint. Here is nothing but the Merits of Christ invocated, good sound Protestant Doctrine; It will be well if the *Blessed Lady, Saints* and *Angels* take it not ill for depriving them of their part, whom they are obliged chiefly to invoke in the hour of death by the Council of *Trent*. This is so notoriously true, that in the Popish Countries the chiefest and most earnest Prayers are to the Virgin, otherwise they dispair of ever getting out of Purgatory. The Oath of Secresie afore-mentioned is a witness to what I say; by this you may perceive that all their Speeches are Suppositions. But it is necessary and lawful at sometimes, especially at this, to impose upon the People to retrieve a bad cause by some holy Tricks and Cheats.

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